

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 987

By Ramsey

A RESOLUTION to honor Team BUSAR for its search and rescue operations.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pleasure in recognizing a group of public servants that helps save human lives through search and rescue missions; and

WHEREAS, Team BUSAR is a world-class, all-hazards search and rescue team that supports and assists with National Park Service (NPS) search and rescue operations in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; and

WHEREAS, Team BUSAR's vision serves as the driving force behind its high fitness and recruitment standards and core values: Build The Team, Do The Work, Be The Superhero; and

WHEREAS, the BUSAR Foundation is a nonprofit organization composed of members with extensive backcountry and outdoor experience and specialized professional expertise from the NPS, Army, Navy, Marines, and Air Force; members also have experience in aviation, tracking, survival, firefighting, law enforcement, and medical professions; and

WHEREAS, Team BUSAR members participate in regular internal team exercises and cross-training with outside agencies, adding advanced proficiencies and certifications; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Team BUSAR has participated in numerous missions, both big and small; on average, the team contributes more than 4,000 hours each year to NPS search and rescue operations; and

WHEREAS, some of the more notable incidents in which Team BUSAR has participated include the crash of N1839X and the Bohanan, Clements, Hill, and Lynch search and rescue missions; and

WHEREAS, as an extension of its mission, Team BUSAR offers Preventative Search and Rescue training to the community through education campaigns within the park and seminars through local venues; and

WHEREAS, Team BUSAR founder and leader Andrew Herrington has extensive search and rescue experience in the Smokies as a wildlife ranger, wildland firefighter, and backcountry law enforcement ranger and used his expertise to forge this highly dedicated team; he was recently honored with the Department of Interior Valor Award, the Tennessee Conservation Hero Award, and the National Park Service Search & Rescue Award for creating Team BUSAR and for his role in the Gatlinburg Firestorm; and

WHEREAS, Matt Jernigan, founding member and executive director of Team BUSAR, has more than twenty-five years of outdoor experience in backpacking, mountain biking, trail running, and adventure racing and holds numerous search and rescue certifications; an East Tennessee native, he has a deep knowledge of the Appalachian Mountains and is a Smoky Mountains 900 miler, having hiked all trails in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; and

WHEREAS, the other members of Team BUSAR include Brian Borkowski, Alex Ransom, Ken Miller, M.D., Anthony Geist, Andrew Morgan, Greg Grieco, assistant team leader John Sharbel, Jason Benjamin, Johnny Johnston, Ben Harrell, Jeff Wadley, Luke Ritter, Ben Landkammer, K-9 Kato, Richard Cornwell, Wells Holbrook, Andrew Howe, Zack Copeland, Jonathan Dee, Bill Ivey, Sarah Love, Ephy Love, and Rickey Castorena-Ramirez; and

WHEREAS, Team BUSAR is a vital asset to this State and the NPS and is worthy of our approbation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Andrew Herrington, Matt Jernigan, and the members of Team BUSAR for assisting and supporting search and rescue operations in the Great Smoky

Mountains National Park, salute their dedication, courage, and expertise in saving lives, and extend to them our best wishes for much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy and upon proper request made to the appropriate clerk, the language appearing immediately following the State seal appear without House or Senate designation.